





# SHIPPING INTELLIGENCE.

## ARRIVAL.

OCTOBER 14.—*William the Fourth*, steamer, 53 tons, Captain Wiseman, from the Clarence River. Passengers—Mr. Skelton, and five in the steerage.

## DEPARTURES.

OCTOBER 14.—*Sooty*, schooner, Captain Ward, for Port Nicholson. Passengers—Mr. J. J. Curran, and Mr. J. Macbeth.

OCTOBER 14.—*Lucy Ann*, cutter, Captain Sheridan, for Launceston. Passengers—Mr. C. King.

OCTOBER 14.—*Governor Phillip*, brig, Captain for Norfolk Island. Passengers—Lieutenant Butler, R.N., Mrs. Butler and two children, Captain Blackford and two children, Miss Gray, Miss Smith, and five of the 11th Regiment, and seven prisoners of the Crown.

## COASTERS INWARDS.

OCTOBER 14.—*Flora*, 12, Grimwood, from Lake Macquarie, with 17 tons coals; *Kreppel*, 8, McQuigan, from Brisbane Water, with 250 bushels shells; *Sarah*, 49, Milne, from Lake Macquarie, with 50 tons coals; *Afford*, 9, Settree, from Brisbane Water, with 300 bushels shells; *Quail*, 9, Sparks, from the Hawkesbury, with 320 bushels shells; *John Wilson*, 35, Martin, from the Paterson, with 1230 bushels maize.

## COASTERS OUTWARDS.

OCTOBER 14.—*Sampson*, 30, Chandler, for the Bellinger, with sundries; *Sarah*, 49, Milne, for Lake Macquarie, with sundries; *William the Fourth*, steamer, 53 tons, Wiseman, for the Clarence, with sundries; *Princess*, 31, Somerset, for Lake Macquarie, with sundries; *Kreppel*, 8, McQuigan, for Brisbane Water, in ballast; *Afford*, 9, Settree, for Brisbane Water, with sundries; *Quail*, 9, Sparks, for the Hawkesbury, with sundries; *Kangaroo* steamer, 52, Teggart, for Wellington, with sundries; *Brady*, 19, Shakeshaft, for the Hawkesbury, with sundries; *Merman*, 20, Busby, for the Richmond, in ballast; *Anne*, 62, Neil, for Newcastle, with sundries; *Flora*, 12, Grimwood, for Lake Macquarie, with sundries.

## PORT PHILLIP.

ARRIVAL.—OCTOBER 7.—*Shamrock*, steamer, Captain Gilmore, from Sydney.

DEPARTURE.—OCTOBER 4.—*Martha* and *Elizabeth*, schooner, 81 tons, Pockley, master, for Sydney. Passengers—Mr. and Mrs. Sykes, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, Messrs. Black, Bell, and Murphy. Cargo: 1 hoghead oil, 1 box cheese.

The *Rogin* has taken on board 20 working bullocks, and 10 horses for New Zealand, also a quantity of Ordnance stores. Twenty-three rank and file of the 90th regiment will embark on Friday next, also Captain Reid, Lieutenant Lee, and Ensign O'Connell. She is expected to sail on Saturday next.

The *Urgent* has the whole of her cargo on board, and will sail for London on Sunday next. The mail will close at six p.m. on Saturday.

The *Hindoo* will commence loading for London in the course of to-day.

## DIARY.

MEMORANDA FOR THIS DAY.

OCTOBER. RISE, 5.10. HIGH WATER, 1.15. WEDNESDAY [6 18 16 22] 7, 8, 17, 142.

Full Moon—October 15, at 8 evening.

## THE

Sydney Morning Herald.

## WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1846.

"Sworn to no master, of no sect am I."

## REMARKS ON PORT ESSINGTON.

(From a Correspondent.)

As the settlement of Port Essington, now and ever since its establishment, exclusively a military one, will, probably, ere long (unless abandoned by Government) be thrown open to settlers, some information regarding it may be acceptable to the readers of this journal, as the result of two visits to the place, and a residence there on a late occasion, of upwards of four months. Like all other new settlements, this has had no lack of enthusiastic supporters, some of them parties interested in buying up the delusive hopes entertained at home of its capabilities for growing various valuable articles of tropical production, and of its becoming an emporium from which British goods are to be imported into the Celebes and other islands of the southern portion of the Indian Archipelago, in exchange for the produce of these places. It has also been considered as well adapted for a port of refuge for crews of vessels shipwrecked in Torres Straits.

On making the land in the neighbourhood of Port Essington, from seaward, it appears low, and thickly wooded, nothing but an unvarying outcrop of trees being visible until it is closely approached. The remains of a beacon on Point Smith point out the boundary of the Port, and it is not until after having proceeded ten or twelve miles up the harbour, that the settlement appears in sight. The harbour, sixteen miles in length, is wide and safe, but not easy of access, on account of a dangerous reef off the entrance; with a channel on either side. There being an excellent Admiralty chart of the Port, and published sailing directions by the master of H.M.S. *Albatross*, the navigation is rendered easy to any one provided with either of these. Vessels generally anchor at less than half a mile from the shore.

The settlement of Victoria, founded in 1837, by Sir GORDON BAKER, is built upon the promontory of Minto Head, remarkable for a rather high white cliff at one extremity, on the summit of which a small fort or block house has been erected, while at the other end a neat and commodious hospital appears among the trees. Midway between these two, the bank, which is there low, has been cut into to form a road leading down to the pier, a ruinous structure, accessible to small boats at nearly all times of the tide. The buildings are few in number, all of wood, of the simplest construction, and were briefly brought in frame from Sydney. They are all, without exception, of the type of those raised upon stone foundations, more or less infested with white ants, which have, in some cases done considerable damage, by hollowing out the beams and other principal supports. They consist of Government House and the Officers mess room, both very paltry and insecure edifices, also four stores, two built entirely of wood, and two having foundations of stone. The officers, with the exception of the surgeon, are not suitably accommodated. The men are lodged in small huts, most of which are constructed of reeds, and are very uncomfortable in wet weather.

There is a plentiful supply of water from several wells, and fuel may of course be obtained in any quantity. The present establishment at Port Essington arrived in November, 1844, and relieved the original party (including a

small reinforcement from China) then reduced to about 30 men. It consisted, on its arrival, of 2 subalterns, 1 surgeon, and 53 rank and file of the Royal Marines, and is now under the command of Captain MACARTHUR, with local rank of commandant.

No one who has resided in Port Essington in the seventh year of its formation, can help being struck with the ruinous appearance of the place, and the small progress made in bettering the condition of the unfortunate inhabitants, whom a mistaken policy has doomed to a residence there of an uncertain period of years, until even hope itself has almost deserted them. Such had been the condition of the remnant of the first party, before receiving the news of their expected relief, in October, 1844. The provisions served out were generally of bad quality, having been long in store. Of many important articles in such a situation, such as lime-juice, the supply was very precarious, or, if abundant, was frequently not issued. Fresh meat was served out at very rare intervals; although there were generally abundance of bullocks, of which a large proportion of the annual supply was allowed to die unused. The reason was simply this. The bullocks averaged about 300 lb. Two days' supply (at 1 lb. a man) was all that could be used at one time, there being no salt to preserve the remainder; consequently, unless there were 150 or 200 rationed off at once, the remainder would soon become rancid, and unfit for use. A visitor to Port Essington naturally points to the immense extent of mud and mangrove swamps left dry at low water, and then acted upon by the fierce rays of a tropical sun, as the source of a miasm likely to produce fever and ague. A large swamp of this kind, covered only at spring tides, exists close to the settlement, within 400 yards of the hospital. The noxious exhalations from any of these swamps are at times as powerful as to produce a feeling of nausea in any one walking over them.

In treating of Port Essington with regard to its eligibility as a settlement, I shall be as brief as is consistent with the importance of the subject. Commencing with the natural capabilities of the soil, there are two great drawbacks to be considered: first, the very small amount of land available for agricultural purposes; and, secondly, the excessive heat and unhealthiness of the climate, which would render necessary the introduction of labourers from India or the neighbouring archipelago. There are a few spots where by means of a well regulated system of irrigation, a sufficiency of rice and sugar might be raised to meet the wants of a small colony; but even should the amount produced be unlimited, Port Essington would never be able to compete with the neighbouring islands, and the settlers would find it more profitable to purchase than to raise these articles. With respect to the raising of other produce, it need only be borne in mind that for months together during the dry season there may be only a few passing showers, the impression of which is removed by next day's sun; while, on the other hand, during the rains the only good land in the place is converted either into a marsh or a shallow lagoon. Port Essington, too, can never be considered a country adapted for the rearing of cattle, and sheep are altogether out of the question. At most a few hundred head of the former are all that the Coburg Peninsula can possibly maintain.

I have alluded in the commencement of this article to the expectations held out by some, of Port Essington becoming a market to which the Malays are to resort to exchange the various valuable productions of the Indian Archipelago for British goods. The prime mover and subsequent supporter of this project is Mr. ENL, who has descended largely on the subject. These expectations were founded on the well-known fact that a large fleet of boats from Macassar have, from time immemorial—at least long previous to its discovery by Europeans—annually visited the north coast of New Holland, to prosecute the fishery of *trepan* or *bêche la mer*, a large sea-slug, the *Holothuria* of naturalists, an article in great request with the Chinese. In January and February, 1845, seven or eight proas, each of about twenty tons burthen, and each manned by about thirty men, arrived at Port Essington, and remained during the season. It was informed that from seventy to one hundred is the annual number which visit the north coast where they locate themselves in small parties in the various bays, from the Coburg Peninsula on the west as far to the eastward as half way down the Gulf of Carpentaria. The trepan is caught by diving in shoal water, boiled for a short time in shallow iron vessels, cut open, re-boiled in a decoction of mangrove bark, and dried in stages over a fire in long houses or sheds of bamboo, after which it is packed up ready for the Chinese market. Owing to the exclusive monopoly enjoyed by the Dutch (under whose flag these proas sail) in Macassar, and the enormous and almost prohibitory duties on the importation of British goods, it is useless to hope for any influx of trade to Port Essington from that quarter, unless under the Malays (or strictly speaking the Bugis) brought into the settlement anything for sale except a little rice and a few fowls and cocoa nuts.

As a port of refuge for the crews of vessels shipwrecked on the Great Barrier, and the inner detached reefs of Torres Straits, Port Essington is ill adapted. It is distant upwards of 600 miles, nearly due west from Booby Island, consequently a slight error in longitude (at all times difficult to ascertain in boat navigation) may cause the port to be missed, from the general uniformity of aspect of the whole north coast, and want of high ground or other prominent land marks. The distance to Coupang is not much greater, and the mountains range of Timor is visible from a great distance. Nevertheless, it must be borne in mind, that several shipwrecked crews have found their way to Port Essington, and I have myself been a witness to the extreme kindness and hospitality shown them by the Commandant and officers.

In conclusion, I think I may venture to add, that there is no disinterested person, who has had the opportunities afforded to the officers of the surveying vessels of

visiting the northern coasts of New Holland, who will not agree with me in advocating the entire abandonment of Port Essington. It has been the grave of a fearful amount of European life; and, after a fair trial, has entirely failed in promoting the objects of its founder and supporters, with the solitary exception of having afforded assistance to a few shipwrecked crews. When the Home Government shall at length have arrived at a true knowledge of the merits of the case, it is to be hoped that the place will be given up; and, if we must have a settlement on these coasts, that a more advantageous spot will be selected.

NOTE.—In the event of steam communication ever being established between this colony and India, Port Essington, being out of the direct tract, will be useless as a depot for coals, for which purpose there is no place on the coast better adapted than Cape York, also the best situation for a landing relief to shipwrecked crews. Vessels passing through Torres Straits would also frequently call there for wood and water, which are abundant and easy of access; there is good anchorage, and being in the direct tract of ships bound to India by the eastern passage, a detention of a few hours would only be occasioned.

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at the usual hour.

## APPROPRIATION UNDER THE ROAD ACT.

MR. WENTWORTH brought up the report of the Select Committee appointed to consider the appropriation under the Road Act, and moved that it be printed. Ordered.

MR. WENTWORTH then gave notice of his intention, on Friday next, to move for leave to bring a Bill to repeal the Lien on Wool Act, and substituted other provisions for the place thereof, and to amend the local ordinances now in existence as to the vesting of the appropriation of the ordinary revenue elsewhere than in the Legislative Council.

MR. WENTWORTH brought up the report of the Select Committee appointed to enquire into the working of the Lien on Wool Act, and moved that this report, together with the minutes thereof, be printed. Ordered.

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## NEWCASTLE.

MR. GRANT enquired of the Colonial Secretary whether any intelligence had been received from England respecting the prospect of New England becoming a free port.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied, that the subject alluded to was one upon which a good deal of correspondence had taken place between the Executive and the Home Government; and although some time might elapse before a final answer was received, he was not without a hope that, considering the manner in which this application had been urged, the answer would be a favourable one.

## NEWCASTLE ROAD.

MR. WENTWORTH moved, pursuant to notice, that an Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, requesting His Excellency to apply the sum of £200, out of the £3000, voted by this Council for the improvement of the Newcastle road, to the repair of the bridge over the road between Newcastle and Maitland, referred to in the petition presented to the Executive and the Home Government; and although some time might elapse before a final answer was received, he was not without a hope that, considering the manner in which this application had been urged, the answer would be a favourable one.

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Secretary that this matter should be brought under the consideration of the Government, he could not see the force of the objections which had been urged against the present motion, and should feel bound to press it.

The House then divided upon the motion, with the following result:

Ayes 7  
Noes 12

Majority against the motion 5

SCAB IN SHEEP.

MR. COWPER rose, pursuant to notice, to move for leave to bring a Bill for the amendment of the Scab in Sheep Act, and proposed that instead of the title mentioned in the notice he had before given, the Bill should be called "A Bill to prevent the travelling of sheep infected with the scab on the public roads and thoroughfares of the colony, and for other purposes therein mentioned." This Bill, he stated, was framed on the Report of the Committee to which this subject had been referred; but he was unable at present to go more fully into an amendment of the law in this respect, although its state was very unsatisfactory; and he hoped the subject would be taken up at an early period of the ensuing session by some honorable member more competent to deal with it.

Leave having been given, the Bill was introduced and read the first time; and was then ordered to be printed, and read a second time on Friday next.

## SYDNEY POLICE CLERKS.

MR. LANG moved, that an Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to place upon the estimates, such a sum as His Excellency shall see fit, in compensation for certain reductions effected in the salaries of the Clerks of the Police Department, under the authority of the City Corporation. The circumstance of his bringing forward this motion might, he said, appear inconsistent with his previous conduct in this House, in which he had generally supported reductions rather than of additions; but he conceived they were as much bound to do justice to the Clerks of the City Police Establishment as to the Clerks of the other establishments; and as they had already voted an address to the Governor for the purpose of obtaining for the latter a restoration of the salary which they had been deprived of by the reduction of the City Clerks, they were bound to deal with the Clerks in a similar manner.

MR. WENTWORTH stated, that although he had no objection to the former address, with regard to the Clerks of the Police, he thought it was as much bound to do justice to the Clerks of the City Police Establishment as to the Clerks of the other establishments; and as they had already voted an address to the Governor for the purpose of obtaining for the latter a restoration of the salary which they had been deprived of by the reduction of the City Clerks, they were bound to deal with the Clerks in a similar manner.

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